

Writing Student Friendly Learning Goals - The Tempered Radical

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The Tempered Radical

November 19, 2008

Writing Student Friendly Learning Goals

One of my all-time favorite throw-downs here at school happened a few years back when my principal---who I respected and enjoyed---insisted that we post learning goals on our boards for every class period. "Posting goals," he argued, "keeps students informed about exactly what it is that they are supposed to be learning in class each day."

And you know something: He was right. Experts from Rick Stiggins and Larry Ainsworth to Bob Marzano have proven time and again that engaging students in their own learning by posting objectives in class is a practice worth pursuing.



The problem was that our principal had decided on a particular format for posting learning goals that didn't make any sense to me. Known as SWBAT objectives, we were supposed to write statements that described what "***Students would be able to do***" in measurable terms. Now, the math teachers didn't have any troubles at all. They instantly started posting objectives that looked like this:

"The students will be able to divide two decimal numbers with 80% accuracy."

For us language arts and social studies teachers, though, the process wasn't nearly as clean cut. The first challenge was that our objectives aren't always the kinds of objectives that you can learn in one class period---and more importantly, it's difficult to measure some of the open-ended objectives that comprise our curriculum.

So the members of my learning team ***who chose to play along*** would have confusing objectives like this posted on their boards:

"The students will be able to self-select reading materials with 80% accuracy."

OR

"The students will be able to make meaningful contributions to classroom conversations with 80% accuracy."

These kinds of statements didn't make sense to me or to my students, so I didn't play along----and I got in trouble for it! I'll never forget the first time that one of our assistant principals came in, observed one of my best lessons of the year, and left me a note with nothing else written on it than, "You need to start posting your objectives daily." I called it a "Parking Ticket," tore it up and forgot about it.

My frustration level peaked, though, when my principal called me to the office over the whole deal. "Bill, what's the big deal?" he said, "Writing the objective on the board will take you ten minutes.

"Just do it, huh?"

Never being a Nike-kind-a-guy, I decided---*with my principal's permission*---to do as much research as I could about posting objectives in class. "As long as you find some way to post objectives in your room, Bill, I don't care what it looks like. But I am going to expect you to come up with something."

What I quickly found out didn't surprise me at all: Most assessment experts argue that it's not the act of posting objectives that has a positive impact on student learning.

Instead, it's the act of ***posting objectives in student friendly language that matters***.

Consider this quote from assessment expert Rick Stiggins:

Explaining the intended learning in student-friendly terms at the outset of a lesson is the critical first step in helping students know where they are going...Students cannot assess their own learning or set goals to work toward without a clear vision of the intended learning. When they do try to assess their own achievement without understanding the learning targets they have been working toward, their conclusions are vague and unhelpful.

(Stiggins, Arter, Cahappuis & Chappius, 2004, pp. 58-59)

So I started working to polish a system for identifying essential outcomes and posting learning targets in student friendly language. For me, that involved a few steps:

Deconstructing my standards: It's amazing how complex state standards really are! Oftentimes, one standard can include several different skills that students are supposed to master. Don't believe me? Then check out this standard from my social studies curriculum:

Objective 4.03: *The learner will examine key ethical ideas and values deriving from religious, artistic, political, economic and educational traditions, as well as their diffusion over time, and assess their influence on the development of selected societies and regions in South America and Europe.*

This one standard expects students to do a thousand different things, doesn't it?

They're supposed to examine ethical ideas and values that derive from religious, artistic, political, economic and educational traditions. Then, they're supposed to examine how these traditions have changed over time. Finally, they're supposed to assess how these traditions have influenced the development of Europe and South America.

Each of those skills require different styles of instruction and different methods of assessment--- and written as is, ***there ain't a twelve year old in the world*** that is going to be able to figure out exactly what it is that they're supposed to learn!

Creating I Can Statements: Student-friendli-fying deconstructed learning targets for me began by writing I Can Statements. Rick Stiggins, among others, push I Can Statements because they are worded in a way that encourages students to measure their own learning. Consider the following deconstructed learning target from my social studies curriculum:

202.3: *The learner will evaluate the impact of changing distribution patterns in population, resources and climate on the environment in South America and Europe.*

Written as an I Can Statement, it would look like this:

202.3: *I can judge how changes in population, resources and climate effect the environment of South America and Europe.*

Which do you think my twelve year old students will understand better?

Defining a specific task. Once I'd deconstructed my standards and written I Can Statements, I decided to define a specific learning task that parents and students could use to measure their mastery of content. This defined learning task was added to the end of each I Can statement. Here's an example:

202.3: *I can judge how changes in population, resources and climate effect the environment of South America and Europe. This means that I can make predictions about what might happen to the environment in places where populations rise, resources fall, or the climate changes.*

Defining a specific task has even helped ME with my planning and instructional delivery. Now, when working with an objective, I know exactly what kinds of activities to engage my kids in because I've detailed the specific outcome that they are supposed to achieve.

Communicating with parents and students: The final step in the process for me has been to create unit overview sheets detailing the specific learning targets that we're focusing on for each unit. These unit overview sheets go home at the beginning of each new topic of study, allowing parents to keep up with what we're studying in class.

They're also included in student notebooks and are referred to constantly in class. There is a place for students to record the scores of classroom assessments and to rate their own mastery of learning.

Here's an example:

[Download Western Europe I Can Statements V2](#)

Now, I won't lie to you: This entire process has completely kicked my behind! In fact, I've been working at this for the better part of two years now. Crazy how long it takes to revise and edit an instructional practice, huh?

I've read constantly about assessment, looking for new ideas about communicating standards to parents and students. I've muddled through two incredible curriculums, deconstructing standards. I've debated with colleagues about the learning targets that are the most appropriate for each unit that we study, revised my tracking sheets and unit overviews a dozen times, and reminded myself every day for the past two months to write objectives on the board.

I've started to revise my warehouse of lesson plans to align with individual learning targets and begun to design assessment questions for each I Can Statement. My next step will be to start recording student learning in my gradebook by I Can Statement so that I can start tracking mastery at the learning target level. More than once, I've wished that all of this work had been done for me at the Central Office level. "Why in the world do they give us objectives written in language that we can't even understand?" I've complained.

"Who's got the time to deconstruct and rewrite their curriculum before they even start to teach it?"

But now that I've gotten this far, I'm proud of what I've accomplished. I now post objectives every day, knowing that my kids will understand them---and knowing that my assessments and instruction are aligned with required elements of the curriculum. Parents seem to appreciate having something tangible and concrete to hold on to, and students can actually tell ME when THEY'VE mastered their own learning.

So whaddya' think? Does my process make any sense? What should I do differently?

Work cited:

Stiggins, R., Arter, J., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2006). *Classroom assessment for student learning: doing it right---using it well*. Upper Saddle River, NJ : Pearson Education.

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Thanks for a well-written, thoughtful article. I have a lot of work to do now. Gee, thanks... LOL
Seriously, this is good stuff.

Posted by: Bonnie Keller | [November 19, 2008 at 06:23 PM](#)



Hey Bill,

Thanks for the timely article. I've been given a similar ultimatum about posting my teaching goals on the board and I too have been frustrated with the concept. My third graders get nothing out of reading our standard course of study goals and I lose 10 precious minutes of my planning time writing them on the board. I checked out your resources and I'm going to give some thought to adding elementary level language to my goals. I'm still overwhelmed with the sheer amount of goals this includes since I am in a "self-contained" classroom and I teach all of the course subjects! We'll see how it goes.

Posted by: Michelle Wise Capen | [November 19, 2008 at 07:27 PM](#)



Thanks for the thoughts. I like your ideas--I've re-written in student friendly language--but not in the first-person for them. How great! However, I've been doing a student-friendly weekly objective. And on Fridays, students take a quiz just on that week's objective to see if they mastered it. It is just graded Yes or No (and they also rate themselves on their confidence on whether they mastered it). Now--if kids do not receive "Yes" they must retake--and I'm doing this to try to stress how there are tangible things they are supposed "to be able to do" in the course. Going good so far--though I'm having a hard time getting all of them to retake when they don't pass. Sorry for the long response! (I teach 9th grade Earth Science)

Posted by: Bethany Weisberger | [November 19, 2008 at 08:13 PM](#)



Dear Bill:

I know you'll be shocked, shocked, that I disagree with you on this concept, particularly where high school students are involved, but we'll both have to live with the horror of it all.

My district, which is run by good, well-meaning people, came up with a new, change-the-face-of-education idea recently and have forced it on all of us, after a day long teaching session by a

"facilitator." After one hour of unmitigated horror, I met a colleague during a break and we said to each other, without prompting and simultaneously, "please, kill me now." So poorly taught was the seminar, and so vacuous was the content we suffered through it for the rest of the day. I'm still slowly rebuilding damaged brain cells.

What could be so bad? The basic concept is similar to what you're suggesting, the idea that if one posts learning goals, incredibly effective learning that was previously impossible will take place. There are, however, a few new innovations. We're required to discuss the goals with the kids and get them to agree upon the goals, so they will feel involved and have "a stake" in the outcome. After a short time, we're supposed to review progress with the kids, and produce graphs and/or charts to map the progress. We're supposed to do this at least twice a semester for specific goals. It is, of course, a matter of faith and inevitability that progress of truly brobdingnagian proportions will occur.

As in your experience, such things are all but impossible for English, and are of virtually no value. But perhaps I can demonstrate the value of such things to my students, who are, I suspect, pretty much average, decent high school kids.

In doing as was required of me in five classes, in four of the five, students asked me, while I was trying to get them to come up with learning goals, "uh, why are you asking us? Aren't you supposed to know this stuff?" The other class merely stared, blankly, at me.

Fortunately, my principal understands what's going on and only expects us to go through the motions and not let it get in the way of learning. So I have all of the required postings, with multi-colored, professional graphs and charts and the principals can check the "he has the stuff posted" block on my evaluation forms.

Something similar happened a year ago when a new central office administrator had us produce all manner of documents relating to curriculum so that she could post all of the 100+ standards for English that the state requires on our district website. Her idea was that parents wanting to move into the area would see which standards we emphasize and would be impressed, causing an immediate influx of involved parents and kidlets. I could just see it: "Look Bob, this district teaches standard 94A, sub 1. sub sub b, backslash 4.3c!" "Gosh Mary! That's my favorite! We must enroll our offspring immediately!"

Do I need to say that all our work went for nothing and it was never posted? Thought not.

I've always found that merely telling the kids what we're going to accomplish before beginning a unit, or even a given worksheet, does the trick, particularly if I do it with enthusiasm and do all I can to make the work fun.

Posting such things in the room? Each and every year I have kids wander into the room after Christmas, the same room they've seen daily for months, stop and stare, dumbfounded, and ask: "Hey! When did you get that clock?" Me: "Uh, it's been there since the first day you entered the room in August." Them: "No! Really?" Me: "Yup."

Most wouldn't even notice such "goals," let alone care.

Posted by: Mike | [November 19, 2008 at 10:48 PM](#)



Even as a math teacher (who can write percentage goals), I find this very valuable.

One quick thing: I think it should be

202.3: I can judge how changes in population, resources and climate affect [not effect] the environment of South America and Europe.

Posted by: Jenni | [November 20, 2008 at 05:51 PM](#)



Two comments, Bill.

First, I'm sure you're aware of Marzano's research that it would take the average American student 23 years to master all the standards currently expected of them from K-12.

http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/Standards/5982IR_AwashInASea.pdf

In the examples you have posted of your standards revision, I actually see you paring them down in your language. ("Making predictions about the effects of population change" is far more honed and tangible than "evaluating the impact of changing distribution patterns"). Did you do this deliberately, I am curious?

Further, did you leave any standards out of your reworkings-- that is, evaluate some as "power standards," versus others as less significant?

<http://www.amazon.com/Power-Standards-Identifying-that-Matter/dp/097094554X>

Second comment: Mike, your story makes my heart ache.

I am in tremendous empathy with your frustration. Are there aspects of English which cannot be quantified? Absolutely. Are kids going to be uncomfortable and resistant when you first present goal-setting to them? Most likely. But frankly, none of this negates the potential of the approach, or the research backing it up.

What strikes me about your anecdote is what DID negate the approach: that is to say, its initial presentation to you as a professional. Did anyone discuss how to modify goal-setting for English? Did anyone show you how to model goal-setting-- in ENGLISH content-- for your kids? Did anyone talk to you about how such an approach requires, first, a frank discussion with your kids about the cultural sea-change of investing in their own learning-- and that their buy-in can take months to develop? Did anyone tell you that you can BOTH tell kids what they will be learning, AND ask them to help determine what they want to learn?

Yeah. I thought so.

So forgive me if I place the blame here nowhere near the pedagogy, and squarely on the shoulders of the "well-intentioned," but unimaginative people who think it can be transferred magically to every subject, every age, and every environment.

We've all had enough of the Harry Potter School of Education, don't you think? :)

-- Dina

Posted by: [Dina](#) | [November 21, 2008 at 01:13 PM](#)



Mike,

I would argue that you appear to be in total agreement with Bill. Before asking students to begin work, you explain to them the objective of what they're going to accomplish. And, I'll bet you don't read them a line from your state's course of study, I'll bet you state the goal in pretty reasonable, kid-friendly language.

In other words, as a teacher you have:

- Thought through what it is you want students to learn from a given assignment, which may have even involved considering school, district, or state curriculum guidelines
- Turned that objective into language that makes sense to your students
- Explicitly told your students what you want them to accomplish

I would bet you've even gone so far as to build assessments that align with the objectives you've outlined.

That sounds to me like what Bill is arguing for.

Posted by: [Parry](#) | [November 21, 2008 at 01:13 PM](#)



I disagree with posting learning goals in the form of 'The student will' statements or using state standards (i.e., 1.04....).

If adults struggle to 'unpack' some of the state standards, then how will a standard serve as a learning goal for students?

Too many school administrators require teachers to have learning goals posted in each classroom rather than focusing on student understanding.

From observing effective teachers and observing the implementation of curriculum from each content area, I have witnessed the biggest impact on student understanding when teachers use one of more of the following approaches:

Generalization(s)

Essential Question(s)

Purpose of Lesson (i.e., relevance to students)

Writing statements such as "Students Will..." almost robs students of the joy of learning. Why should students conduct a debate or review multiple perspectives when the teacher has already provided them with a glimpse of the finish line? The best teachers I have observed require their students to struggle with information, to research, to explore and to search for meaning. Writing specific learning goals or learner outcomes on the board does not challenge students and for some

gifted learners it may provide too much information to make the learning process worth the effort. As adults, we know the learning outcome, but we want students to discover meaning and relevance through the meaningful assignments we develop.

Additional Resources for Educators:

Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction: Teaching Beyond the Facts

by H. Lynn Erickson

<http://www.corwinpress.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book225354&>

What is an Essential Question?

by Grant Wiggins

<http://www.authenticeducation.org/bigideas/article.lasso?artId=53>

Posted by: sweber | [November 22, 2008 at 12:03 AM](#)



Dear Dina and Parry:

I suppose my primary gripe with the kind of thing Bill is suggesting is that it seems very much a one-size fits-all, if-everyone-does-this-miracles-will-occur educational fad. The finest teacher in the world teaching such tripe will not turn it into gold. The problem is not with the content or the delivery of the content, but with the endless attempts by some to reinvent the wheel and to charge premium prices for that reinvention.

As educators we know all too well that our profession is prone to embracing fads, particularly if they are "research based." All too often, these fads are quietly abandoned several years down the line with no one (particularly those who imposed the fad) admitting the obvious: They made no sense in the first place, and not only did not help, but often made things more difficult for students and teachers. Of course, we tend to immediately replace them with the next saviour fad.

Education is a mixture of science and art. Science in that each teacher must be a master of their discipline and of teaching technologies and techniques. Art in that the application of all of this requires substantial experience, intuition, creativity and common sense. The best teachers tend to be those who have mastered the former and work very hard on the latter on a daily basis, therefore there is much to be said for experience for experience not only teaches us what works, but what does not. This is why young, inexperienced administrators tend to avoid experienced teachers before imposing the latest educational fad. They don't want to be told that their brilliant ideas are going to be expensive, harmful failures.

Many of those trying to sell the newest magic, fix-all system wish to ignore the art component in teaching, some going so far as to argue that teachers really aren't necessary and are a large part of the problem. For such folks, the magic curriculum--research based--will lead to educational utopia.

Imposing a one-size fits all mandate on all teachers, particularly at the high school level, accomplishes little. Those teachers who are struggling with the basics of their discipline, to say nothing of the art of application, have no time for such mandates, which do nothing at all to help them in any meaningful way. Those in the middle will find them another time-draining annoyance

and of no real help, and the best teachers will find such simplistic techniques--research based or not (don't get me started on the "research based" fad)--insulting.

Indeed, I sometimes tell kids what we're working on and why, but certainly not before every lesson and/or every day. If I'm doing my job, it's just not necessary and wastes precious time. I establish such matters and understandings early in each school year, reinforcing them, upon occasion, as necessary. The kids understand and accept the parameters of our partnership, because even though they're kids and they have to be a bit rebellious from time to time, they also want adults to act as adults. This is particularly true of their teachers.

Posted by: Mike | [November 22, 2008 at 04:34 PM](#)



As a student teacher, I have seen this done. What does the principal think when a lesson deviates from the listed objectives?

Posted by: T | [November 23, 2008 at 09:57 PM](#)



T asked:

As a student teacher, I have seen this done. What does the principal think when a lesson deviates from the listed objectives?

First, T---thanks for stopping by! Hope your career in education ends up being a rewarding one.

Second, to be honest---in my experience, principals aren't in the room long enough to be able to know whether or not lessons deviate from the posted objective! They tend to stop in for five minutes, see the objective posted, and walk out happy.

Once, when I was required to post SWBAT objectives, I left the same objective posted for 3 months. Got praise from the same AP 3 times for "being on board" and for engaging my students in their learning.

It was funny!

The bigger discrepancy, though, is that I teach in a low poverty school with high achieving students---so I have more flexibility to make instructional decisions. Often, rigid approaches to curriculum monitoring are more common in high-needs schools.

So my answer might be different if I worked in a high poverty school----which is one reason I don't teach in a high poverty school. The rigid approach to instructional delivery has driven me away.

A sad side effect of NCLB.

Anyway....looking forward to seeing more comments from you in the future...

Bill

Posted by: [Bill Ferriter](#) | [November 24, 2008 at 06:28 AM](#)



Dear T:

Bill is quite correct. One of the essential skills that all teachers must learn is how to tell the difference between what must be paid lip service and what must be done. It is good indeed that most of this sort of thing falls into the category of appearance rather than reality. In other words, you have to post the visible evidence that you're implementing the newest fad, but you're safe to ignore actually doing most, if not all, of the idiotic practices that go along with the posting. Principals will, for the most part, be concerned only with being able to check the "teacher has evidence of compliance with miracle posted" box on their walk through or evaluation form. The most advanced districts will have all of this on laptops instead of paper, but the principle for the principal is the same.

In terms of understanding the concerns and needs of classroom teachers, building principals are essentially on another planet. Administration building administrators are in another universe. Good principals will instinctively try to stay out of the way of good teachers. Bad principals will actively interfere. The best principals actually remember what it was like to teach and try to be helpful.

Posted by: Mike | [November 24, 2008 at 11:24 AM](#)



Mike wrote:

"In terms of understanding the concerns and needs of classroom teachers, building principals are essentially on another planet. Administration building administrators are in another universe. Good principals will instinctively try to stay out of the way of good teachers. Bad principals will actively interfere. The best principals actually remember what it was like to teach and try to be helpful."

I would hope that building principals and assistant principals work with teachers to support teachers in seeing that each student receives a 'guaranteed and viable curriculum' (Marzano). Does this mean that teachers use a script to teach? No. Professional teachers are encouraged to share best practices, teaching strategies that reach certain students or groups of students, and Aha moments from implementation of the written curriculum. School administrators (good or bad) should be focused on the learned curriculum, not whether or not teachers post learning goals, state standards or other items which are required by building administrators.

I would hope that more schools are beginning to operate as a professional learning community or as a collaborative team. For nearly 100 years, classroom teachers worked in isolation and each teacher determined the learning goals, lesson plans and assessments in isolation. Principals evaluated each teacher as an individual and classroom walk-thru observations (3-5 min.) served as

a method for snoopervising teachers, rather than supervising (English).

Martin and Brown (2007) wrote, "While a school can be run by a single leader and managed pretty effectively, increases in student achievement come when that leadership is shared and is larger than a single individual. Leadership has moved far beyond one person in schools that are truly making a difference"

(p. 66). The best teachers should become teacher leaders and share their strategies with other teachers. Teachers who are not currently teacher leaders should strive to become a teacher leader, because the current leadership may transfer schools or retire and new leadership will be needed.

This is the message that I would like student teachers to have as they enter into the field of education, rather than a message of do the work, but don't try to focus on learning goals or supporting all students if you think it is a fad. This type of approach will not benefit a first year teacher.

Posted by: sweber | [November 24, 2008 at 06:02 PM](#)



"Defining a specific task has even helped ME with my planning and instructional delivery."

This seems like reason enough to have a visual prompt.

Posted by: [Jim McGuire](#) | [November 27, 2008 at 08:39 AM](#)



I really appreciated this post. As a preservice teacher, I have seen teachers posting the "objectives" for the day but certainly not in the child friendly manner you have come up with. Also appreciated your relation to the standards. It is quite a chore to wade through all of the verbage, so it would be really helpful to have it rephrased in the "I can..." language.

Posted by: Mrs. Potts | [December 02, 2008 at 06:34 PM](#)



Hey Bill,

I really liked your use of the "I can" statments and think that they should be used in math objectives. I dont think there is anything particularly motivating/insightful to a student to see written on the board "student will understand place value and number sense, addition of two digit numbers up to 100, and subtraction of two digit numbers...with 80% accuracy."

Signpost are nice and all for the students, but I think that your extra effort and thought really shows in the written objective...and hopefully the kids respond well to them.

Posted by: [pcpesik](#) | [December 03, 2008 at 02:28 AM](#)



I use an entirely standards-based assessment system (based on the Marzano book http://www.amazon.com/Classroom-Assessment-Grading-That-Work/dp/1416604227/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234498568&sr=8-1 and O'Connor http://www.amazon.com/How-Grade-Learning-Linking-Standards/dp/1575178168/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234498617&sr=1-1)

It forces you to create learning goals and align your assessments with them. I've had my struggles because like you, I've had to redo almost everything. Plus I've had to ditch some of my most beloved projects (science teacher) that I did because they were cool, rather than because they actually learned anything from them. I do the tracking thing, where students chart their scores for each topic (Forces and Newton's Laws, Periodic Table, etc).

I think though that even more powerful than the learning goals is that the students have a clear understanding of the level of knowledge/performance it would take to reach an A, B, or C (or in my class 4,3,2,1,0). Rather than saying, you need 80% for a B it's a lot clearer to my students that they need to be able to calculate the density of an object, predict whether it will float or sink, and measure the magnitude of the buoyant force exerted on it to earn a 3.

Posted by: [JYB](#) | [February 12, 2009 at 11:28 PM](#)



Bill --

This is a great reflection. I'm a superintendent in a small district in WA state, and this is where we're trying to go as a district. I plan to share your reflections with staff, if that's okay.

Posted by: Mark Wenzel | [March 19, 2009 at 06:55 PM](#)



Associating an item of core content w/ daily activities and assuring that each item is covered at least once in Spanish I and II and led me to rewrite my lesson plans, this time with greater variety and more content covered. Communicating them in student-friendly ways definitely helps!

Posted by: [Dan](#) | [November 17, 2010 at 03:43 PM](#)



Posting SWBAT goals can be viewed as an irritation and an impediment to using precious prep time to the best advantage. To satisfy requirements I created a key and mark my daily tasks with these symbols. I still think posting SWBAT is a time waster, especially when I verbally discuss the "why"

of what I am teaching with my high school level students.

As for the key, here's an example: asterisk=test taking skills, check=verbal discussion skills, dot=reading comprehension

Posted by: pdwebb | [November 20, 2010 at 02:14 PM](#)



PD,

I think the key to both the system that you're talking about here and the system that I talk about in my post is that WE developed them.

That means we're invested in them. We believe in them---and when teachers believe in something, they're far more likely to implement those practices consistently and effectively.

I do far more to keep my kids in tune with the content they're supposed to be learning and the topics that we're covering in each lesson today because the process that I use for keeping the kids in tune is a process that I developed and feel comfortable with.

Whenever school leaders choose to force practices on their teachers, implementation will be ragged and ineffective even when it is enforced.

Any of this make sense?

Bill

Posted by: [Bill Ferriter](#) | [November 20, 2010 at 04:14 PM](#)



Educational goals may be broad but seemingly a process of continuous thinking and learning process. Today's generation may need some innovative techniques. If the method of teaching is effective in some group of students there are methods that are not applicable to another group it is a matter of analyzing what your students need but as an educator there is really a significant difference if there are goals set on the wall. Students who are visual can properly prompted what are expected of them for the day. This also save time in managing the class if it is done as routine in class. It is also an early training for them to keep up with the informations/lessons inside the classroom. It is one way of communication that visibly available for the class. Above average students can easily understand this posting of objectives on the wall. Objectives posted on smartboard or promethian board and even in teacher's websites gives the student's some direction of what to do.

Posted by: Imelda Orit | [January 03, 2011 at 03:35 PM](#)



As I work with teachers on unpacking curriculum standards and creating student-friendly learning

targets, I hear feedback comments from these teachers that promote what I believe the full intent of these objectives are meant to create; "I find these SFOjectives are creating dialogue between the students and myself. They ask about specific resources they will be reading, or viewing; what skills or problems will they be using; these objectives are leading students to inquiry related to the essential question I begin the unit with; These objectives are written so clearly that as a new teacher, I can even reference them throughout instruction to keep ME and the STUDENTS focused on the learning.

Yes, there should be some element of mystery to lessons from time to time, but there should be no mystery to the learning target. IF there were, then how would the students know when they have become proficient?

Posted by: [fitzal](#) | [February 06, 2011 at 09:07 PM](#)



Bill, I got a ton of great ideas from you about friendly student goals and using the Ipad for formative assessment. You have a great blog. I would like to share ideas with you by giving you my web address to my social studies blog.

<http://bringsocialstudiesalive.blogspot.com/>

Posted by: [Paul Aleckson](#) | [August 22, 2011 at 09:10 AM](#)

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Bill Ferriter teaches 6th grade language arts in North Carolina, where he was named a Regional Teacher of the Year for 2005-2006.

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- The Teacher Leaders Network is a diverse community of accomplished teachers from across the United States. TLN is supported by the Center for Teaching Quality as part of its mission to cultivate teacher voice around important matters of education policy and teaching practice. The views expressed on this page are those of the individual author or authors and not necessarily the Center for Teaching Quality.

